

2nd announcement for the 3rd 2020 Mars Rover Landing Site workshop

Dear Colleague:

The third landing site workshop for the 2020 Mars Rover mission will be held at the Doubletree Hotel, Monrovia, CA, on February 8-10, 2017. We are soliciting presentations on the science merits of the eight remaining candidate landing sites for the Mars 2020 mission (Table 1). Workshop logistics and a request for registration can be found at: <http://marsnext.jpl.nasa.gov/>. The format will include oral presentations and general discussion of the eight remaining candidate landing sites.

Table 1. Eight Remaining Candidate Landing Sites for Mars 2020 Mission. Ellipse center point, elevation and ellipse size with the long axis oriented east-west.

Landing Site	Lat (degN)	Long (degE)	Approx Elevation (km)	Approx Buffered Ellipse Axes (km)
Colombia Hills	-14.5478	175.6255	-1.93	9.6 x 8.7
Eberswalde	-23.7749	-33.5147	-1.49	8.6 x 7.7
Holden	-26.6130	-34.8167	-2.18	9.5 x 8.1
Jezero	18.4386	77.5031	-2.64	10.7 x 8.3
Mawrth	23.9685	-19.0609	-2.24	11.9 x 9.8
NE Syrtis	17.8899	77.1599	-2.04	11.1 x 8.2
Nili Fossae	21.0297	74.3494	-0.65	9.7 x 7.7
SW Melas	-9.8132	-76.4679	-1.92	9.7 x 8.7

Additional information on the science of the eight candidate sites, including prior science presentations related to these and other candidate 2020 landing sites, and information on how the 2020 engineering constraints map to the eight candidate sites can be found at: <http://marsnext.jpl.nasa.gov/>. An engineering pre-briefing teleconference of landing site safety, traversability and operations is being planned in January 2017 (details to follow). Presentations for each site will be coordinated by a single science spokesperson at the workshop who will be identified from those submitting relevant presentations.

Descriptions of the 2020 mission and a summary of NASA's Mars exploration strategy are found at: <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/mars2020/>, <http://marsnext.jpl.nasa.gov/>, <http://mars.nasa.gov/programmissions/overview/>, and <http://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/reports.cfm>.

The primary goal of the third workshop will be to further evaluate the 8 candidate landing sites that emerged from the second workshop and reduce the number of candidate sites remaining under consideration to three or four. Evaluations at the workshop will employ the framework provided by existing data for Mars (e.g., MRO), the science requirements of the 2020 mission, and a better understanding of the 2020 engineering requirements and traversability of the landing sites relative to these requirements. ***Presenters at the workshop are expected to make a comprehensive, persuasive talk on why a specific site***

is the right one for the 2020 mission and payload, including how and where the science objectives of the mission can be accomplished.

The 2020 project science group has adopted a set of science criteria for the 2020 landing site that will be posted at <http://marsnext.jpl.nasa.gov/> in advance of the workshop and that should be considered in developing the science potential of candidate sites: these criteria will be used to evaluate the relative merits of the sites at the end of the workshop.

Persons wishing to make a presentation at the workshop should submit the title of their talk to John Grant (grantj@si.edu) and Matt Golombek (mgolombek@jpl.nasa.gov) by January 13th, 2017. We anticipate that each site will be allotted approximately 1.5 hours for presentations plus initial discussion. The workshop program will be distributed in the third announcement that will be posted shortly before the workshop.

Sites emerging from the workshop will continue to be considered in more detail by the 2020 Project, Mars Program, and the Science Community to further assess how they meet engineering constraints and science criteria. A fourth workshop is planned that would further narrow the list of sites under consideration.

All members of the scientific community are encouraged to participate in the Mars 2020 site selection process, as input from the science community is critical to identification of optimal landing sites for the mission. We look forward to your continued involvement in these activities!

Sincerely,
John Grant and Matt Golombek
Co-Chairs, Mars Landing Site Steering Committee